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TRADITIONAL PRACTICES IN A PRAGMATIC INSTITUTION.

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WHILE THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE IS ESSENTIALLY PRAGMATIC IN ITS BASIC OUTLOOK, IT IS CLOSELY RELATED TO TRADITIONAL ASPECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION. THESE EXTREME POSITIONS MUST BE AVOIDED AS THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE DEVELOPS A CONSISTENT FRAME OF REFERENCE FOR GUIDING POLICY DECISIONS. THE BASIC CONCEPT OF THE COLLEGE SUFFERS WHEN THE INSTITUTION BECOMES MERELY A COMMUNITY STATUS SYMBOL OF HIGHER EDUCATION OR WHEN THE INSTITUTION IS EVALUATED AGAINST THE NORM OF CURRENT PRACTICE. CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE TRADITIONAL AND LIBERAL FORCES AFFECT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE WITH RESPECT TO ITS STUDENT SERVICES, ITS CURRICULUM, ITS RELATIONSHIP TO ITS FACULTY, AND ITS ADMISSION POLICIES. CAUTION IS NEEDED SO THAT INSTRUMENTALLY DERIVED VALUES ARE NEITHER ACCEPTED AS ABSOLUTES NOR CONSIDERED AS ENDS IN THEMSELVES. THIS SPEECH WAS DELIVERED AT THE ANNUAL JUNIOR COLLEGE-UNIVERSITY ARTICULATION CONFERENCE (7TH, URBANA, ILLINOIS, FEBRUARY 15-16, 1968). (WO)

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TRADITIONAL PRACTICES IN A PRAGMATIC INSTITUTION?

[by Richard C. Richardson]

The history of higher education in the United States makes a fascinating study. The post-colonial proliferation of denominational schools, the development of the state university and the land grant institution, along with the early days of our own movement, all offer the opportunity of securing perspectives for those of us who are currently caught up in what is generally regarded as the most exciting development in higher education in this century. Part of our problem, of course, relates to the fact that we are so busy doing things that we seldom have time to think very much about that which we are doing. But I am told that college presidents have always been subject to human failings. In 1773, the Reverend Samuel Locke wisely resigned the presidency of Harvard College after confessing to the corporation that he was responsible for the interesting condition of the maid in the president's house. While community college presidents are, of course, immune from this particular type of failing, I would like to suggest that there yet may be areas in which improvement can be wrought.

Higher education may be discussed according to Brubacher at three different levels: practice, policy and philosophy. Our most eminent works in the community college field today deal primarily with practice; to a more limited extent, policy; and with philosophy not at all. Presumably, all of the philosophy that we need now, or ever shall need, has been expounded by the Truman Commission of 1947, which stated, the time has come to make education to the 14th grade available in the same way that high school education is now available; and by the Educational Policies Commission of 1964, in the statement, "Unless opportunity for education beyond the high school can be made available to all, the American promise of individual dignity and freedom cannot be extended to all."

[This speech was delivered at the Annual Junior College-University Articulation Conference (7th, Urbana, Illinois, February 15-16, 1968).]

As the theme of my discussion this evening, I would like to review some of the philosophical assumptions that underlie current practice in the community college as a way of furnishing insights and suggesting some new directions. I believe that a failure to identify such assumptions and to consider their genesis leads to the blind acceptance of certain practices that do not necessarily promise the most efficient use of our resources.

We may define two basic positions which may be said for practical purposes to constitute acceptable limits for a philosophical continuum. The first of these may be termed the tradiational position. While you will not find many people in the community college movement who consider themselves traditional, you will find many traditional elements in most community colleges. The traditional position places emphasis upon the importance of general or liberal education for its intellectual values, implying that certain subjects should be learned as ends in and for themselves, because they improve the quality of the mind. To the traditionalist the basic nature of man is unchanging and since man essentially is everywhere the same, the type of education which he receives should emphasize unchanging values and avoid narrow specialization, particularly of an occupational nature.

The educational liberal, on the other hand, believes in the importance of general or liberal education for its instrumental values. Rather than emphasizing intellectual content, the educational liberal believes general education subjects are important to the extent that they contribute to some desired objective. Frequently, the desired objective is an occupational objective, since the educational liberal also emphasizes specialized education, particularly of an occupational nature. As you might expect, the curriculum of the community college is based primarily upon the concept of instrumental values, but the roots of the junior college movement extend backward into the tradiational framework also.

My thesis this evening will be that the community college is essentially pragmatic in its basic outlook, but that it is also an institution of higher education and as such, it must consider the context within which higher education functions. Those who lead in the community college movement must seek to identify and follow policies that are based upon instrumentally derived values, but which at the same time are not isolated from the mainstream of prevailing thought in traditional higher education. While avoiding the two extremes, we must fashion a consistent frame of reference to guide our policy decisions.

Let me illustrate how the basic concept of the community college may suffer from excessive reliance upon either basic thought system. Harry Golden, in his book For Two-Cents Plain, expresses the following thought, "This is what I have learned. We were happier when mother emptied the drip pan under the ice box. Our unhappiness, of couse, cannot be blamed upon the refrigerator. It would have been nice if our mothers and grandfathers had had one. A refrigerator would have saved them work. The refrigerator is only an indirect contributor to unhappiness. What happened was that we made of the refrigerator a status symbol. It became not simply a convenience in which to store and freeze food, but a possession which helped measure and confer respect. A refrigerator cannot do this. All it can do is keep food fresh and make ice cubes for burbon. The man who buys one is not a better man for the purchase."

I would like to suggest that the traditional school of thought has viewed the community college as a status symbol. In order to emphasize the status aspects of the institution, the curriculum has frequently been shaped towards the more respectable college transfer or liberal arts program. In this way, for the least amount of expense, we obtain the maximum amount of status. But, may I paraphrase. The community college cannot be the status symbol. All it can do is to

educate students and to provide service to its community. The community that buys one is not a better community for the purchase.

There are problems with respect to the liberal approach also. Those who over employ the pragmatic approach frequently forget that current practice is not accepted as good in and of itself, nor can it be an ultimate objective. In addition to the error of attempting to purchase status through the development of a community college, we have also indulged ourselves in attempting to create community colleges by observing the norm of current practice. If it is being done by other institutions, then it must be good. May I provide you with a second quotation from Sir Josias Stamp, "The individual source of statistics may easily be the weakest link." Harold Cox tells the story of his life as a young man in India. He quoted some statistics to a judge, an Englishman, and a very good fellow. His friend said, Cox, when you are bit older you will not quote Indian statistics with that assurance. The government is very keen on amassing statistics. They collect them, add them, raise them to the nth power, take the cube root and prepare wonderful diagrams, but what you must never forget is that everyone of those figures comes in the first instance from the Chowty Dar (village watchman) who just puts down what he damn pleases."

We may conclude, then, that there are two extremes of philosophical thought which influence the development of the community colleges. Many of us represent new institutions that have only recently been founded, while others are still in the emotional throes that follow divorce from a public school system. In certain respects we may be compared with the upwardly mobile individual who, while adapting himself to new circumstances suffers the insecurities that inevitably accompany any change in status. For us there is the fear that our old friends the secondary

school will place too much emphasis on former relationships. At the same time, we are concerned that those from whom we most desire recognition, the colleges and universities, will think less of us because of our humble origins. To ease these gnawings of insecurity, we surround ourselves uncritically with the trappings of our new friends, the colleges and universities hoping thereby to gain increased acceptance. I am afraid in this regard that some of us have not learned very well the lesson of the "nouveau riche".

At the same time most of us recognize and are proud of the fact that we do represent a new development in higher education growing primarily out of 20th century educational thought as exemplified best in the works of Dewey. Unfortunately, some of us have been carried away by our unique natures and have set about to impress others of this nature by a slavish devotion to something called innovation failing to recognize that false idols are easily raised in the name of worthy ends. As community college leaders, it is right that our primary concern should be with instrumentally derived values, but we must not forget that there are two primary factors in the development of such values. One of these is, or course, the quality of a solution induced by a given practice, but the other derives from the historical continuum or context in which the solution occurs. I cannot help but observe in passing that the problem would be somewhat reduced if we simply insisted upon objective evidence concerning the values of prevailing practice rather than taking the word of Chowty Dors who are emotionally involved in the practice in question.

As the newness of our movement wears off and as it becomes apparent that we are not going to be the ultimate innovation on the American educational scene, it becomes increasingly important that we have some clear knowledge of what we are, of what we stand for and of what we hope to accomplish so that if we must make

choices between desirable alternatives, we may select those that are most central to our purpose. In making this criticism of our fraternity, I am reminded that Robert Hutchins remarked, "The number of University Presidents in the past quarter century who could think in terms of fundamental policy was limited to the fingers of one hand." May I suggest that we try for a better representation among community college presidents as we consider matters of fundamental policy with respect to the community college.

Let us now turn our attention to an examination of some current practices to determine the degree to which they are contributing to the achievement of our objectives. In each instance I will attempt to identify the basic assumptions that have resulted in the practice to the end of determining if these assumptions continue to be valid and if so, whether or not prevailing practice is the most effective means of fulfilling the assumptions.

Problems involving students are not new. Harvard students petitioned President Samuel Langdon in 1780, saying, "As a man of genius and knowledge, we respect you, as a man of piety and virtue, we venerate you. As a President, we despise you." President Langdon resigned.

Probably no area has suffered more from being subjected to the norms of prevailing practice than student services. As a response to the growth in total enrollments and the increase in size of classes, complex student personnel services including counseling and other related areas have been developed to preserve a certain degree of individualization with respect to the instructional process. Unfortunately, the advent of professional counselors and other specialized student personnel workers has been interpreted by some teaching faculties as absolving them of any responsibility for continuing their own activities with respect to educational advisement and supervision of student activities. This concept has frequently been aided by unthinking community college administrators. The Dean of Student Personnel Services who is

often isolated from the faculty by the administrative organization of the college has been forced to rely upon counselors to do much of the advisement previously carried on by the teaching faculty. Typically, we have endeavored to make a virtue of this seeming necessity.

As the number of counselors in comprehensive institutions have increased and as community colleges have attempted to emulate the counseling center concept of the university, we find increasingly that counselors constitute their own groups and do not come into frequent daily contact with members of the instructional staff. This has resulted in considerable mis information about the responsibilities of each and has, in some instances, detracted from the ability of the counselors to do the job for which they were originally employed. Yet another problem that centers upon the students may be defined as the identity crisis. It is a well known fact that students of community colleges tend to retain their identification with the high schools from which they came and to resist assimilation on the part of groups organized by the college. This has reached such an extreme in some instances that college presidents have said, in effect, we will organize some minimal activities to convince the accrediting associations that we are concerned with the total student, but we will accept as normal the concept of the community college as an educational filling station where students come to partake in the intellectual aspects of life. I need not point out the traditional overtones of the emphasis upon the intellectual nature of the student.

Much of our literature encourages this failure to deal properly with the total student. Henry Steel Commager, in the book, Universal Higher Education, states, "The new colleges should emulate neither the high school nor the university but plan their own character. What a pity if those who control them should consider it necessary to copy the high schools in their athletic programs or the

colleges in their fraternity and sorority organizations." Commager and many of our colleagues overlook the reason for athletic programs in high schools and fraternity and sorority organizations in colleges. Individuals in these age groups have certain basic needs. Now if community colleges plan to do away with intercollegiate athletics and fraternities, I would like to suggest that they had better have something to take their place.

What can we do to resolve some of these problems with respect to our students?

First of all, we can involve students meaningfully in the real work of the institution. The era of student goverments as an instrument of the administrative power structure is past. We may, if we like, continue to take a traditional view towards our students as children only recently removed from the protective custody of their parents and requiring rules and regulations to ensure that they do not go astray. We may prescribe the way in which they dress, the manner in which they cut their hair, as well as similar customs. Of course, if we do this, we will have to reconcile ourselves to establishing a disciplinary apparatus and of devoting much of our attention to that apparatus in order to ensure that the students violate none of our regulations. Combined with this practice, we shall probably want to issue a clear statement that we are not responsible for the students when they are off our campus. By establishing restrictive conditions on the campus, we may encourage students to leave it as soon as possible. By denying any responsibility for the students when they are not on our campus, we may absolve ourselves of the responsibility for their unsupervised behavior. I would like to suggest, however, that a more meaningful alternative would involve the development of a procedure for permitting students to govern themselves insofar as possible, of providing the students with sufficient freedom to grow a little while they are on our campuses,

through making a few mistakes in the presence of adults who can provide meaningful patterns of behavior and guidance when this becomes necessary.

Secondly, I think it is essential that we re-involve the faculty with the students. This will not be easy in many institutions, for once a faculty member reaches the point where he feels that his responsibilities to his students are discharged if he teaches them in class and perhaps posts office hours, it will be very difficult to persuade him that he has a real and continuing responsibility for more than that aspect of the student's life.

There are two essential requirements to the solution of this problem. First we must establish the teaching division as the focus of student services as well as of instruction. To accomplish this, I would suggest that we consider assigning counselors directly to divisions where they will serve to coordinate the non-instructional services and to emphasize the responsibility of the division for the total student.

The second step involves the re-ordering of lines of communication within our institutions so that the individuals responsible for instructional divisions work with student personnel administrators in matters involving student services and are evaluated in part on the degree of excellence of student services in their division just as they are now evaluated on the excellence of the instructional program.

The faculty member must be the key to student advising and activities. We cannot afford to compartmentalize our students between in-class and out-of-class activities. Rather, we must seek for ways of encouraging coordinated attempts to improve the quality of student life and to broaden the responsibility forthese attempts to all members of the faculty, rather than confining them to those who wear student personnel hats.

If we accept the position of the educational liberal that the student must have experiences which will prepare him for his role as a responsible citizen, then we cannot help but conclude that student activities are extremely important. If student activities are important, then we must make provision for them in our schedule just as we now make provision for classes. The student activity period is not the answer. It reduces utilization of classrooms, it floods limited out-of-class facilities and it concentrates student activities so that the individual who is capable of benefiting from more than a single activity is prevented from participating in more than one. I would like to suggest that we seriously consider scheduling student activities in time slots and places with faculty advisors and printing them in our regular schedule of classes. The student could then make out his schedule, reserving time for those activities which he considered important. Listing activities in the schedule of classes would also tend to emphasize their importance as a part of the program for total development of the individual.

Fourth, we must also encourage student efforts to achieve identity regardless of whether or not such efforts do violence to our established concepts of what is desirable from the standpoint of a community college. If a fraternity or a sorority can provide significant new relationships for our students, let us encourage such organizations and guide them so that they do not discriminate or become involved in secret practices of questionable nature. If intercollegiate athletics provide a healthy outlet for certain members of the student body, let us endeavor to promote such programs, but by the same token, let us promote them in a creative fashion. If there are undesirable aspects of these programs as they appear at the secondary or at the college level, can we not find ways of achieving the benefits without imitating the evils?

CURRICULUM

Let us move now to the highly significant area of curriculum. Nevitt Sanford has pointed out that social responsibility is one major goal of the curriculum. In addition to accepting this concept, the educational liberal would feel, also, that the curriculum should be regarded as a major instrument for developing the individual rather than a body of knowledge to be imparted in the traditional sense. One of the objectives that we have been exhorted to attain is that of making the curriculum relevant to the individual. I sometimes think that the majority of what we teach in the community college is not really relevant.

Let us take the liberal arts curriculum. Historically, liberal arts was developed for that group of people who, lacking the necessity of making a living, could devote themselves to civic life and the management of state. Liberal education was developed as a privilege of the few, rather than the many. However, liberal arts, in the traditional sense, is the status curriculum. Is it not interesting, that in many of our community colleges, the liberal arts curriculum is the most popular one we offer? It should be noted that in many of these same institutions, the liberal arts curriculum is the refuge of those least able to benefit therefrom.

The traditional school of thought has contended that the extension of education to the masses could only result in the lowering of standards. I think that anyone who has ever started a community college has encountered this particular idea among the liberally educated citizens of the community in all walks of life. In fact, if the community college emphasizes primarily the liberal arts and extends them to individuals who have little opportunity of benefiting from the type of education

that they represent, the fears of the community concerning a watered down curriculum may well be justified. It would seem obvious that if the community college is to really play a role in the extension of opportunities in higher education, that it must be through a fundamental restructuring of the types of offerings that can be provided at the post secondary school level. That area in which the community college can be most creative is the technical curriculum. It is also the area in which we have made certain fundamental errors, perhaps as a result of traditional thought which does not value very highly specialized education and seeks to segregate it whenever possible from the more respectable general education. There have been many who have felt that technical education cannot be satisfactorily accomplished in an institution that offers the transfer program also. We should admit that there is some evidence to lead us to conclude that in many instances the comprehensive institutions of today are doing far less than might be desirable with respect to their technical education programs.

In many comprehensive community colleges today, there is a pecking order with respect to the status of the instructional program. At the top of the pecking order is the transfer program, followed by the technical programs, and finally in the rear, the developmental or remedial programs. Frequently, a great schism may be observed existing between the faculty in the transfer program and the technical program. The outnumbered technical faculty may be somewhat resentful of their status and embittered against certain members of the academic faculty whom they may regard as not understanding the purposes of occupational education and not contributing through the general education courses that they are responsible for teaching. At the same time, you might find on the part of the academic faculty, a feeling that there was something a little disreputable about the technical programs

and that somehow or other, there was real question about whether this kind of education was collegiate or not. What better example can we cite of the basic conflict between the traditional and the instrumental point of view?

You might also find that the concepts of status prevailing within the institution were well recognized by the community. Consequently, transfer programs would be oversubscribed with many students in them who did not really belong there. Technical educators would have difficulty finding enough students to justify the existence of their programs and would probably be complaining about the caliber of the students they received. Further, you might discover as you looked closely at such institutions that there was an effort being made on the part of technical educators to increase the standards of their courses and to improve the number of students transferring at the end of the technical program. In fact, you might even find some teachers in these technical programs spending more time talking about the number of students that they transferred to various universities than talking about those students whom they had placed. I suppose the general theory here is that if you transfer students out of a technical program then you are proving that that program is just as respectable as the transfer programs. Of course this assumes that the transfer programs are respectable.

If the institution in question offered vocational programs in addition to technical and transfer programs, you might find an even greater intensification of some of the problems that have been previously outlined. Is this illustration far fetched and inapplicable to most institutions? Unfortunately, I think not. There is sufficient evidence to suggest that what I have described is one major pattern with respect to comprehensive institutions today. It is not, thank goodness, the the only pattern or even the most popular pattern. There are several ways in which these kinds of problems can be overcome.

Let us begin with the question of organization. Community colleges sometimes organize all of their technical programs in a so called division of technology. Such an organization is difficult for me to comprehend. I cannot see, for example, how mechanical engineering technology is more closely related to nursing than it is to engineering. It seems to me that part of the problem can be resolved through the development of comprehensive divisions within our community colleges which include both the academic disciplines and the related applied disciplines which can logically be grouped together. Thus I would put the engineering and industrial technologies with the transfer engineering program and possibly with some of the sciences and mathematics depending upon the number of faculty in the institution. I would put the business related technical programs with the business transfer programs and so on. This has the major advantage of bringing those responsible for teaching technical programs into close working relations with those responsible for teaching transfer programs. Further, it means that as the division chairmen make assignments, frequently those who teach in career programs will be teaching some transfer programs and vice versa.

Another thing that we must do with respect to our technical programs in comprehensive institutions is to be very certain that we do not fall into the traditional trap of teaching things for their value as an intellectual discipline. In short, we must be certain that the standards developed are no greater than the positions for which the individuals are being prepared demand. We should avoid the tendency to increase the number of transfer students from our technical programs and the corresponding temptation to increase the standards within the courses so that those who go on will do well at the transfer institution. Further, we ought to be very careful that we do not require the same level of competence from someone taking the technical program in a comprehensive institution that we require from

someone taking a related transfer program, let's say in engineering. If a student can complete a transfer program in engineering in a comprehensive institution as easily or perhaps more easily than he can complete the related technology program, my experience has been that he will go into the transfer engineering program every time. Further, from talking with people in industry, I have come to the conclusion that those who complete the transfer program in engineering will be employed almost as readily as the individual who comes from the engineering technology program, in some instances more readily. For this reason, I want to suggest that we study very carefully the relationships between our technical programs and the jobs for which we are preparing people, as well as the kind of applicants that we can logically expect to get.

If we don't accept this instrumentally derived position, we will find ourselves in the position of many comprehensive community colleges who equip extremely expensive facilities that stand idle 90% of the time because there are 5 to 7 people in the program. By the same token, let us realistically study the nature of our student body and give them the kind of firm guidance that is required to ensure that they take those programs where they can compete effectively in terms of the nature of the requirements. Let us avoid the trap of the traditionalist with the overemphasis upon the status of the liberal arts curriculum.

THE FACULTY ROLE

I would like to turn now to a topic which I am certain is of concern to most of those who are administrators in institutions of higher education today. I refer here to the relationships with members of the teaching faculty. If we examine the history of higher education, we will easily discern that this is not a new problem. The Reverend William B. Blackburn, early President of the University of North Dakota appeared before the Board of Regents and complained that Mrs. E. S. Mott, preceptress in English, regularly and deliberately began to eat before he has asked the blessing. Mrs. Mott retorted that the food was equally poor before and after the blessing. The Board of Regents wisely dismissed them both. While I do not want to use this story as an illustration of how I believe matters involving disputes between faculty and presidents should be resolved, the matter is of critical importance to us today.

There is a new militancy on the part of teaching faculties today. This is true without regard to the level of education. We can observe the teachers' strikes that occurred in public schools in Michigan, New York and Florida as well as many examples of militancy in institutions of higher education. The California legislature passed an act making it mandatory that each community college have a faculty organization for the purpose of bargaining collectively, directly with the Board of Trustees. Administrators were excluded from the faculty organization by law. Washington has a similar law. In Michigan, the Board of those community colleges that have teachers' unions must bargain directly with the unions in matters of faculty welfare. The community college has been described by a number of authorities as the worse example of faculty involvement in higher education today. This is a reputation that from all that I can observe, it very richly deserves. We may again

observe a clear cut difference between the traditionalists point of view with its emphasis upon the maintenance of authority and the power of the president and the board to do as they see fit with the employees, the professors. A more modern point of view in this area, however, would recognize the professional contributions to be made by the faculty and the desirability of making arrangements so that meaningful participation in instructional governance may be obtained.

Under any circumstances, we must conclude that with or without the cooperation of administrators and boards, faculties are coming to have a voice in certain matters with respect to the operation of the institution.

There are certain extremely undesirable aspects of actions that are taking place at the present time. In the first place, it is extremely poor practice to separate administrators and teaching faculty in the policy formulation process. You have, on the one hand, those who understand from their daily contacts with students and faculty those courses of action which are acceptable and desirable to the majority of the institution. You have, on the other hand, those members of the institution who are concerned with implementation and who can see pragmatically the degree which certain courses of action can be implemented and the reception that such courses of action are likely to receive by controlling boards. If you separate these two groups in the policy formulation process, you may end up with two separate conclusions which can be reconciled, if at all, only with a great difficulty since each set of conclusions may be based on a different set of premises. If, however, these two groups can reason together from the beginning of the process, the premises may be established at that point, and the conclusion will inevitably follow, although not necessarily without some anguish.

As I mentioned previously, most community colleges today do not involve their faculty in policy formulation in any other than a very perfunctory way. Such

involvement is, generally speaking, very poorly organized. The responsibility for this failure to involve faculty may be placed upon the administrators and faculty almost equally. There has been a reluctance on the part of administrators to release authority to the faculty. The feeling has been that to do so might result in some course of action being taken that could cause the administrator to lose his job. As a college president, I cannot help but share such concerns. However, with the concern, I share, also, a tremendous amount of faith in the professional character and ability of those who are staffing our community colleges today.

The second part of the responsibility rests with the teaching faculty, many of whom have come from secondary schools where they were not involved in policy formulation at all. Many staff members who have as their frame of reference the secondary school, would like what they regard as the power and status of the college professor, but they want such power and such status without performing the responsibilities that are required if such authority is meaningful. In community colleges we must develop mechanisms such as the faculty senate which provide for an orderly way of bringing administrators and faculty together to work jointly in the policy formulation process. There must be real authority delegated to such groups as well as the necessary safeguards provided to ensure that they operate within an acceptable framework. It is the responsibility of both the administration and the teaching faculty to take the initiative to establish such groups and to make certain they work. The alternative is a great division within our institutions between the teaching faculty and the administrators. The battle that follows such a division will not result in any real advantage to either and will diminish the stature of the institution in the eyes of the public and reduce the quality of the service that is performed.

THE OPEN DOOR

In the traditional frame of reference, the Open Door concept has never been particularly well accepted. Historically there is the South Carolina newspaper which took the position in 1770 that the worst thing that could happen to South Carolina would be a college, not because the newspaper was hostile to education, but as the editorial writer put it, learning would become cheap and too common and every man would be for giving his son an education.

The open door is a key concept in the instrumentalist philosophy that advocates extending the opportunities of higher education to all of those who can benefit therefrom. While none of us in the community college movement would dispute the importance of the open door, there are some of us who have failed to consider adequately, the charge of the traditionalist that expanded opportunities cannot be provided without cheapening the product. May I cite some problems that the uncritical acceptance of a statement of philosophy has created with respect to transfer programs.

Ten years ago when I was at Michigan State University, this institution, like many land grant institutions in the Midwest, was non-selective. Any high school graduate from a state high school was eligible to attend. The university ran remedial courses for which no credit was given. Incidentally, they did have a substantial number of football players in these courses. The attrition rate in the freshman year was simply fantastic, between 40 and 50%. Today, Michigan State University is no longer non-selective. They have admission standards which are steadily rising. This is true with most land grant institutions in the Midwest today.

The role that Michigan State University played in Michigan in the mid 1950's today has been taken over by the community colleges who admit all graduates of local high schools. In some of these institutions, graduates are permitted to go into any

curriculum that they desire, then pressure is placed, not upon the instructor who passes 80-90% of his students through his particular course, but rather upon the instructor who is failing 40% of his students since this is considered most undesirable. I need not point out to presidents of new institutions just how sensitive the question of attrition and number of students requiring developmental education may become.

But let us look at this situation from the position of Michigan State University who observes an institution that is non-selective, admitting any student to any program and then passing through 85-90% of those admitted. Michigan State University remembers that when it was involved in the same practice, only 55-60% of the students admitted actually made it to the next higher level. Michigan State University must draw one of two conclusions. Either the community colleges are doing a much better job of instruction than Michigan State did, or the community college has lower standards than Michigan State. It is obvious which of these two conclusions Michigan State will draw and indeed has drawn. The result of this is that Michigan State has established higher standards for transfer from community colleges to enter the upper division than those which prevail for native students. There is also a national trend in the direction of testing all junior college graduates and basing entrance to transfer institution on the basis of these examinations rather than on work done in the community college.

Do you see the direction in which this trend may lead? Can you foresee that within a few years, if we do not do something, the community colleges are going to be very much like comprehensive high schools. Graduation from them will be meaningless. Those of you who have ever done admissions work where a number of high schools are involved are quite well aware that graduation from high school is no criterion for admission to a program. You must know the high school from which the student

graduated and you must also know the program. I would like to suggest that this is not the direction in which community colleges should move. I might add one more brief illustration to further emphasize this point. In one institution developed along the pattern of certain community colleges in California, admissions criteria were developed for the technical programs. There were no admissions criteria, however, for the transfer programs. Thus, it was possible and indeed it occasionally happened, that a person who was not academically qualified to enter the hotel-motel restaurant program which by and large is not one of the higher level technical programs, was permitted to enter the most demanding transfer program offered by the institution. I would like to submit to you that this is sheer nonsense.

How do we resolve the problem of the open door? I believe that this problem must be resolved through the definition and development of an alternative to our technical and transfer programs. We must be open door as an institution but we must be selective with respect to all transfer and technical programs. In establishing these standards, we must resolve doubts in favor of the student, but we must have a realistic alternative for those who do not meet the standards of other programs initially. Now the nature of this realistic alternative is a topic in and of itself. Let me simply outline a few conclusions that I have reached on the basis of a reasonably extensive study of the problem.

1. The alternative must be open ended. By that I mean we cannot set up a program which does not provide for the possibility of individuals passing on, even though many individuals will not accomplish this.
2. The program cannot have as its sole objective the preparation of people for technical or transfer programs. This is because many

of the people who enter the program will never achieve that level. We do not want to develop a program that condemns the majority who enter it to failure.

3. The program must individualize the treatment of basic skills of a remedial nature. To paraphrase Martin Luther King, group remedial instruction at the college level is dead, the only question is how expensive will we make the funeral.

4. We cannot make such programs ends in and of themselves. In other words, do not believe that any community college should ever offer a degree simply because someone has spent two years there. This is a topic that is very important to me and one on which I would like to spend more time. Unfortunately, the time available this evening precludes such concentration. Let me simply state that the means are availabe for us to do the job within the conditions that I have outlined. It is of vital importance that we develop such an alternative if the open does is to be a realistic concept.

CONCLUSION

Let me conclude by emphasizing that the time is right for a reevaluation of current practive in the light of the philosophical commitments of our movement. Neither tradition for the sake of status nor prevailing practice based upon inadequate norms can be the guarantor of the continued vigor and progress of our institutions. Instead we must study our practices in the light of our objectives and in the context of our position as an institution of higher education.

We are institutions with limited tradition and we need to be proud of this fact. We need to recognize the opportunity that this provides for us to seek new and better ways of doing things. But let us not become overly enthused about the concept of innovation to the extent that we enshrine it above the values that are to be derived from improving practices which have already proved to be effective. Further, we must attempt to convince neither ourselves nor others that the community college is the answer to all of the ills of society. We represent an institution in transition. Instrumentally derived values are never absolutes. They simply become the means to the achievement of new objectives which we may discern at the present only faintly or not at all. We need to study carefully to determine those jobs which we can do well. Equally important, we must learn those tasks that are not appropriate.

Let us not be concerned with the traditional concept of status either. No one ever achievedmore prestige or higher status through being concerned about status or prestige or through imitating those that it regarded as the status image. We can plant all of the ivy that we like and purchase all the button down shirts and build all of the brick buildings in quadrangles and we will never be an ivy

league school. Let us not try to be what we cannot be. Let us rather find those things we do well and recognize that in a pragmatic society, status and prestige come not through imitation but from intelligently and capably fulfilling the needs of those who are responsible for our establishment.

Let us all join together in a solemn pledge that when the history of this era is written, they will not speak of opportunity lost by those whose responsibilities in the present were obscured by visions of the past, but rather they will talk of opportunities seized, of developments shaping the warp and woof of our society towards a more constructive end. Let us hope they speak of an endeavor that dared and succeeded in accomplishing a revolution in higher education.

I thank you.

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